BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

Issue: 97-31 9 Pages
August 1, 1997

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Population

- **Children in British Columbia make up a smaller share of the population than ever before.** In 1971, 27.9% of the population was under 15 years; by 1996, the figures had dropped to 19.7%. Quebec (19.2%) and New Brunswick (19.6%) are the only provinces with fewer children relative to the total population.

Seniors accounted for 12.8% of the population, ranking BC fifth in Canada. Saskatchewan (14.7%) has the greatest proportion of seniors in the country followed by Manitoba (13.7%) and Nova Scotia (13.1%). The senior population in Alberta (65 years and over) make up only 9.9% of the total population. Since 1981, the percentage of seniors in Alberta has been the lowest of any province. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Housing

- **Apartment vacancy rates measured in the October 1996 survey remained low in metro Vancouver, while rising elsewhere in the province, compared with results from the 1995 survey**. In the downtown core of Vancouver, vacancy rates were close to 0%, with the whole metro region averaging only 1.1%. Toronto was only marginally higher at 1.2%. Saskatoon recorded the lowest rate among metropolitan areas at 0.7%. Of the urban areas surveyed in British Columbia, Courtenay topped the list at 13.2%. The rate in metropolitan Victoria was 4.1%. *Source: CMHC*

Family Income

- **The median income of families filing tax returns in British Columbia for 1995 was $45,500, up 2.0% from 1994.** Husband-wife families recorded a slightly higher increase than lone-parents families and persons not in families. Those who did best were dual-earner families with median incomes at $57,400, an increase of 2.3% over the previous year. Wives contributed approximately 40% of the family income. In families where there was a male earner only, median income actually declined 1.8%. Single-earner-female families enjoyed a slight increase (0.7%) in income, although that income was less than half that of male single-earner families ($32,700 vs $15,200).

Half of husband-wife families were without dependent children. For those with children, the average family size was 3.9 persons. Median income of childless couples was two-thirds that of couples with children. Many of these couples were over 65 and retired. Incomes generally tended to rise with family size.

Husband-wife families received 15% of their income from transfer payments. The reliance of lone parent families on transfers was twice that level. In addition, for lone parents, a much larger share (94%) of those transfers came from government programs as compared with 68% for husband-wife families. Three-quarters of husband-wife family income was from employment sources, compared with 60% for lone parents and persons not in families. Husband-wife families were also twice as likely to have income from self-employment as lone parents and persons not in families. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Business

- **The number of employment insurance (EI) recipients receiving regular benefits (seasonally adjusted) in British Columbia remained unchanged at 67,120 in May.** Nationally the number increased 4.2% from

Report **Where s the growth?**

Did you know...?
BC has the lowest death rates from cariovascular disease and cancer in the country.

April. All areas showed an increase. Saskatchewan recorded the greatest (22.1%) followed by Manitoba (16.1%). Both BC and Nova Scotia had the lowest in the nation.

Source: Statistics Canada

Tourism

- **Direct entries of overnight visitors from other countries to British Columbia increased 3.9% in the first 5 months of 1997 compared with the same period in 1996.** Numbers from Europe were flat, but the volume of travellers from Asia increased 9.7% in the period. At 340,000 people, Asian visitors accounted for 20% of entries so far this year. In 1991, they had represented only 11% of total overnight international visitors. Mexican visitors, although still less than 1 percent of travellers to BC, have increased in number by 13% this year over the same period last year.

  Overnight visitor counts from the US showed only a modest increase (2.5%), but numbered 1.2 million people, 71% of total overnight visitors. Same day travellers from the US were up 4.2%. This segment, the largest single group, numbered almost 1.4 million people.

  Ferry passengers between Vancouver Island and the mainland declined by 2.2% in the first 6 months this year over the same period in 1996. US passenger arrivals and departures at Vancouver International Airport were up 7.2% to 1.4 million, January to May 1997. In the same time period, international passenger movements at the airport rose 14.8% to 1.2 million. *Source: Statistics Canada, BCSTATS*

Crime

- **After four years in decline, the Canadian homicide rate increased 6% in 1996.** At 2.11 per 100,000 population, the rate still falls far behind the US at 7.50, but is well above such countries as the Netherlands at 0.20 and Australia at 0.97. British Columbia's rate was 3.24, second only to Manitoba at 3.94. Lowest in the country was PEI with a rate of 0.73. The total known homicides in 1996 in Canada numbered 633; in BC that number was 125.

  Metro Vancouver, with a rate of 2.97 was second highest of the major cities across Canada, after Winnipeg (4.12). By contrast, the rate in Victoria was 1.90.

  About half the homicides in Canada were committed in the victim's own home. Of solved homicides, 84% were committed by a someone known to the victim. (Eighty percent of homicides were solved.) A third of all homicides involved firearms. Another 30% were the result of stabbing. Two-thirds of all victims were males, and males accounted for 90% of the accused. The most common single age for someone accused of homicide in 1996 was 18 years.

  British Columbia had the highest rate of total Criminal Code offenses among the provinces. BC's rate stood at 13,918 per 100,000 population in 1996, compared with the Canadian average of 8,758 per 100,000. (The Yukon and Northwest Territories have considerably higher rates.) BC was second to Manitoba for violent offenses, but well ahead of the rest of Canada in property offenses.

  In metro Vancouver, property crime rates rose slightly since 1991, whereas all the other major cities across Canada reported significant declines. Violent crimes declined slightly in Vancouver, but the city still lead the country in this category. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Health

Breast cancer mortality rates in British Columbia have declined at an average annual rate of 3.1% since 1990. Both BC and Saskatchewan (which showed similar declines) have achieved the highest rates of mammography through organized screening programs. Early detection, together with treatment may be contributing to improvements in survival.

Although BC had the second highest rate among the provinces of women aged 50-69 years ever having had a mammogram, the province ranked fourth for women having had a mammogram within the recommended two years. *Source: Statistics Canada*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Infoline Report:

August 1, 1997

British Columbia Population Projections

Each year BC STATS projects the population of the province and its regions based on demographic and economic trends, modified to take into consideration possible future changes. This cycle, just published, is known as PEOPLE 22 and was completed in the spring of 1997.

Detailed projections, each 12 pages long, with a map, "Economic and Demographic Notes", 4 pages of population pyramids and charts, "Components of Change", "Special Age Groups", "5 Year Age Groups by Sex", are available for BC, the 8 development regions, the 28 regional districts, the 79 local health areas, and a number of "special areas" of local interest. Summaries appear free on our Internet site. Ordering Information follows this report.

BC STATS will service requests for individual areas at $5 per area with a minimum charge of $10 plus GST. VISA or Mastercard required on minimum orders.

The demands for public services, such as schools, hospitals and roads, are closely related to population size and characteristics. In addition, marketing strategies of businesses are greatly influenced by the size and structure of the population. As a result, reliable population projections are an essential tool for planners in both the private and public sectors.

As we head toward the next century, British Columbia faces unique challenges within Canada . Some of the major issues emerging in our province include how to deal with record population growth that will put even greater pressure on our urban communities, our environment and government resources; a changing ethnic make-up of the population requiring a greater understanding of the values of cultural diversity; a health care system that must meet the needs of a growing and aging population; and growing economic and income disparities between our province's regions and people.

The following are some demographic highlights from PEOPLE Projection 22:

The British Columbia population is getting larger and aging. Between 1996 and 2021, the population will have increased by 50%. The median age of the population will have increased from 35.7 to 41.4 years.

Figure 1
British Columbia Population

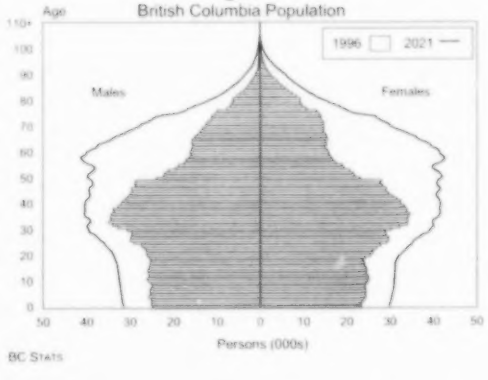
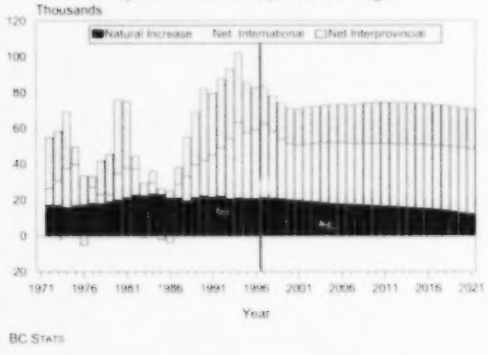


Figure 2
Components of B.C. Population Change



The major factor driving population growth will be migration to British Columbia. International migration will account for 50% of the population gain, followed by interprovincial migration at 28%, and natural increase (births minus deaths) at 22%.

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Even though the number of births in British Columbia will continue to rise, the contribution of natural increase to the overall population growth will decrease, and eventually turn negative.

Figure 3
British Columbia Births and Deaths

Figure 4
B.C. Population 5-19

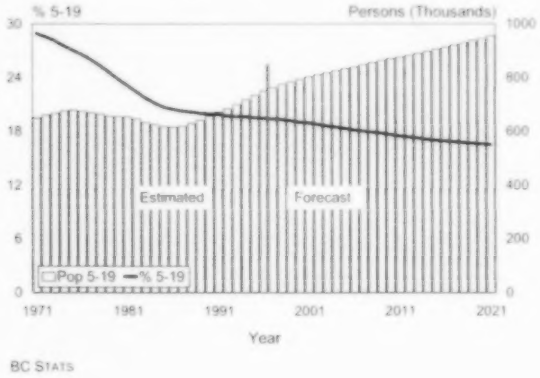
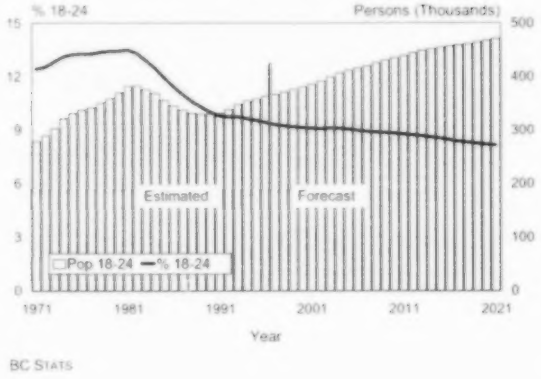


Figure 5
B.C. Population 18-24



The population of school age (5–19 years) will continue to grow, although its share of total provincial population will decline. The same will be true for the population of post-secondary school age (18–24 years).

The population aged 25–34, which is generally associated with first time household formation, will remain relatively constant over the next ten years, increasing thereafter.

Figure 6
B.C. Population 25-34

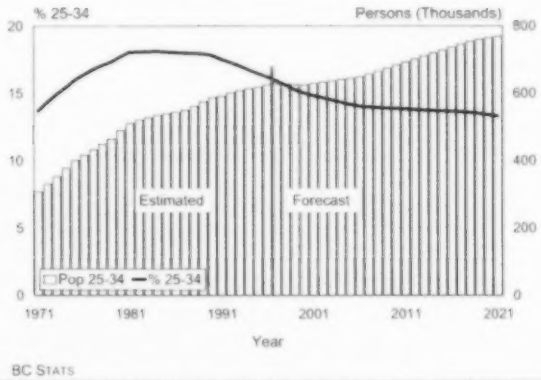
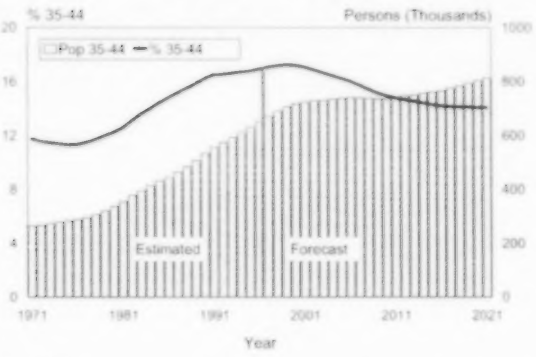


Figure 7
B.C. Population 35-44



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The population of mature labour force age (45–54 years) went through a period of slow growth for a couple of decades, but in the last several years this trend has started to change. Baby-boomers are beginning to enter this age group, and as a result, the population will increase significantly. This will have repercussions on the labour force, especially in terms of career goals and whether or not they can be met with so many people competing for a limited number of higher level jobs.

Both the share and overall population of retirement age (65+) will continue to increase significantly from 12.8 per cent in 1996 to 17.3 per cent in 2021. The same will be true for the very senior population (80+), which will grow from 3.0 per cent of the population to 3.9 per cent. This increase will have a serious effect on health care expenditures given the high per capita health costs associated with seniors.

The population currently aged 35–44 represents the bulk of the baby-boom cohort. The population in this age group has grown, and it will continue to grow steadily over the next decade.

Figure 8
B.C. Population 45-54

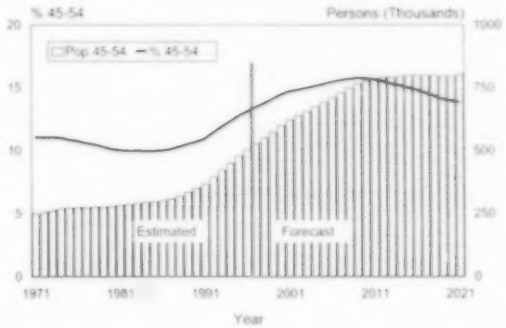

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Figure 9
B.C. Population 65+

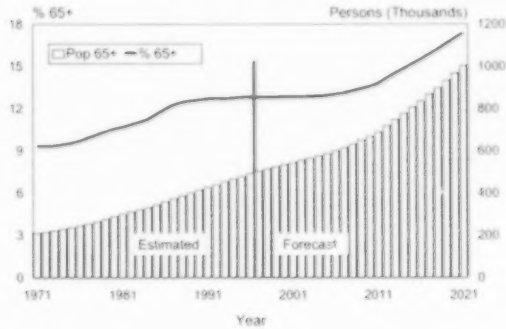

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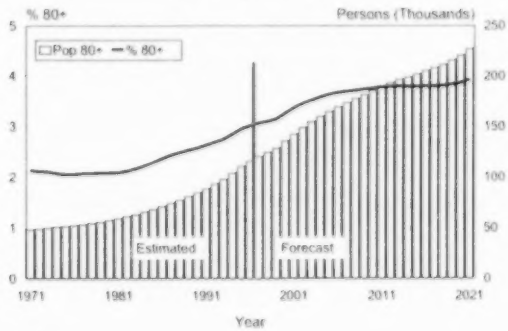
Figure 10
B.C. Population 80+



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Regional Population Projections

There are substantial disparities with respect to projected growth among the 28 British Columbia Regional Districts. Areas in the southern portions of the province will likely see much higher growth rates than regions in the north. One of the reasons for this is that the economic base in the northern regions is far more resource dependent than the Lower Mainland, the lower portion of Vancouver Island, and the Okanagan. The regions that are expected to experience a decline tend to be those that are heavily dependent on resource extraction industries. The Stikine Region is a notable exception to the rule. The reason for the projected growth is the recent threefold increase in the Allowable Annual Cut in that area.

Figure 11
PEOPLE 22 Regional District Population Growth
1997-2021

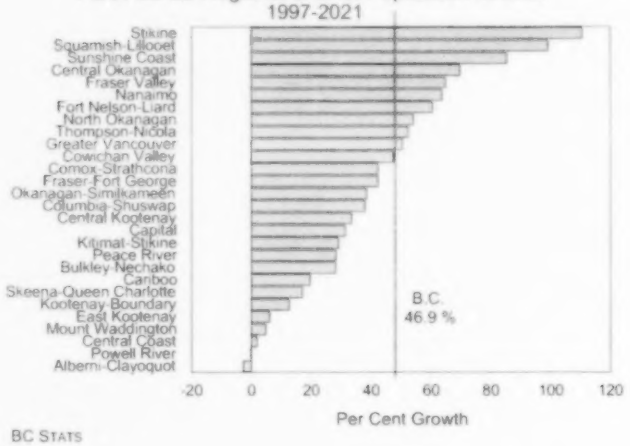

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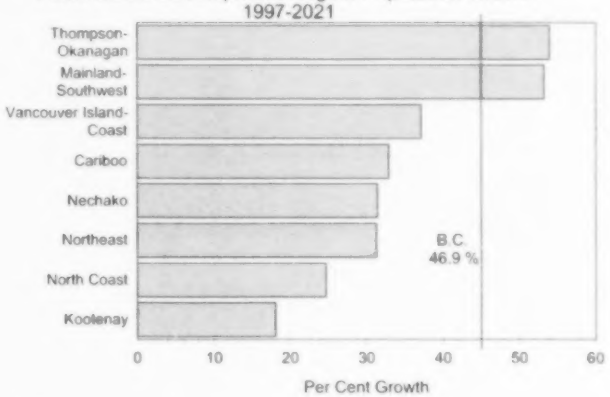
Figure 12, depicting growth by Development Region, shows more clearly the inclination toward the southern regions when it comes to growth. Both the Thompson-Okanagan and Mainland-Southwest regions are expected to experience over 50 per cent growth over the 1997 to 2021 period. The slower growth in the Kootenay region is largely due to the depletion of coal reserves and the anticipated shutdown of various mines in the East Kootenay area as we enter the next century.

Figure 12
PEOPLE 22 Development Region Population Growth
1997-2021



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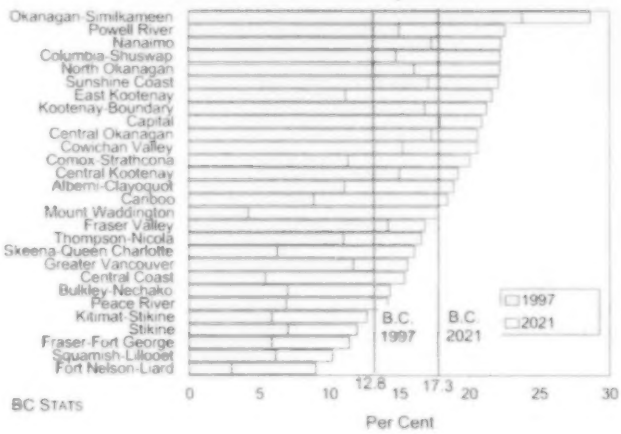
There are regional differences with respect to age as well. Currently, the population 65 and over as a per cent of total population is much smaller in most of the remote areas, and greater in the more populous regions in the southern portion of the province. This is largely a combination of the greater access to services (particularly those related to health care) in the larger centres, and the more pleasant climate of the southern regions, which attracts the elderly looking for a place to retire.

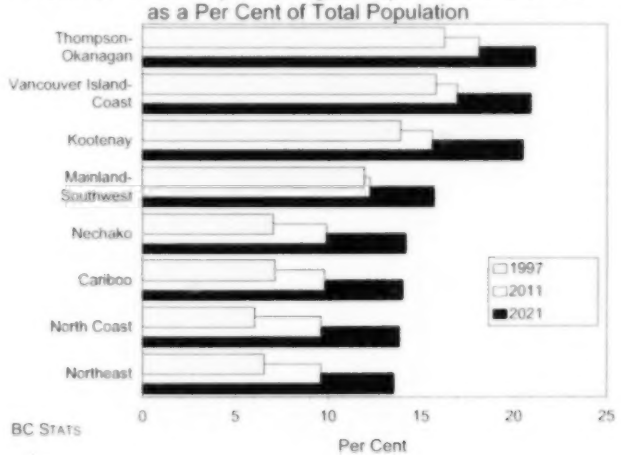
The Regional District chart in Figure 13 indicates that some regions will experience proportionately larger increases in the per cent of population over 65. In many of these cases, this is the result of differential rates of migration to or from an area. Migrants tend to be younger than the population at large. Hence, in regions of high net inflows of population the aging process is slowed. Alternatively, where there is a net outflow, population aging accelerates.

Figure 13
PEOPLE 22 Regional District Population 65 and Over as a Per Cent of Total Population



On a larger scale, the Development Regions show a similar pattern of a more aged population in the south; however, the regions to the north will see proportionately larger increases in the proportion of the population over 65, particularly in the first 15 years of the projection.

Figure 14
PEOPLE 22 Development Region Population 65 and Over as a Per Cent of Total Population



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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/97	% change on year ago
BC	3,915.9	2.2
Canada	30,202.9	1.1
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		% change
(BC - at market prices - $ millions)	1996	on year ago
Current Dollars	103,631	1.7
Constant (1986) Dollars	74,001	1.0
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) May	2,855	6.2
Merchandise Exports (raw) May	2,177	-2.2
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) May	2,783	7.4
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change
(all items - 1986=100)	Jun '97	on year ago
BC	139.9	0.9
Canada	138.0	1.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change
(seasonally adjusted)	Jun '97	on year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,002	1.5
Employed - BC	1,831	1.9
Unemployed - BC	170	-2.7
		Jun '96
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.5	8.9
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	9.1	10.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jul 30/97	Jul 31/96
Prime Business Rate	4.75	6.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.65	6.50
- 5 year	7.00	8.50
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jul 30/97	Jul 31/96
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.3812	1.3748
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.7240	0.7274
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	May '97	on year ago
BC	617.63	3.0
Canada	602.63	3.2

SOURCES:
Gross Domestic Product: Statistics Canada, revised by BC STATS
Population, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

Released this week by BC STATS

- Business Indicators, July 1997
- Current Statistics, July 1997

Next week

- Exports, May 1997
- Tourism Room Revenue, April 1997

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